

# ST. LOUIS ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT *ESPRIT*

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## Leadership Changes in Corps, Valley and District

Summer is normally a time of change in organizations. People come. People go. But the summer of 2004 has been a time when change has stretched from the top position in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to the Mississippi Valley Division and indeed, into the St. Louis District.

In Washington Maj. Gen.(p) (promotable) Carl Strock has been confirmed as our 51st Chief of Engineers stepping into the shoes of Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers. To the south, Brig. Gen. Robert Crear has arrived to take over duties in the Mississippi Valley Division headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss. His predecessor, newly-promoted Maj.Gen. Don Riley, is making the move to our nation's capital to take over General Strock's old responsibilities as the Civil Works Director for the Corps.

Here at home, Lt. Col. Greg Romaindo has stepped in as Deputy District Engineer behind Maj. Joe Tyron, who is in turn focusing his attention on a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.

The stories of these across-the-board changes in our leadership follow.

### Maj. Gen. Carl A. Strock Takes Command of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington, DC — Maj. Gen. (Promotable) Carl A. Strock, USA, EN, accepted the reigns of the world's largest public engineering agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in a ceremony in the nation's capitol Thursday, July 1. Strock, confirmed for promotion by the U.S. Senate on June 25th, thus became the 51st Chief of Engineers, relieving Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, who was retiring following four years as the Army's senior engineer officer.

It is expected that Strock's promotion to the three-star rank of lieutenant general will occur in early August.

The traditional Army change of command ceremony, complete with the ceremonial passing of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Flag from Lieut. Gen. Flowers to Maj. Gen (P)



**Maj. Gen. Carl A Strock, Chief of Engineers**

**New Chief of Engineers, Cont. page 3**

### Brig. Gen. Robert Crear Takes the Mississippi Valley Helm

Vicksburg, Miss. — The first of the major command changes affecting the St. Louis District took place Wednesday, June 23, 2004 in Vicksburg as Brig. Gen. Robert Crear took over as Mississippi Valley Division Commander in a traditional Army change of command ceremony. Crear relieved Brig. Gen. (P) (Promotable) Don Riley, who headed to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Headquarters in Washington, DC and a new second star as a major general. Along with Brig. Gen. Crear's new job will come his appointment as President of the Mississippi River Commission (MRC).

The morning before relinquishing command of the 12-state, 370,000-square-mile Mississippi Valley Division, Riley sent an e-mail message to Division employees.



**Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Mississippi Valley Division Commander**

**New Mississippi Valley Commander Cont. page 4**



## Commander's Perspective



**COL Kevin Williams**

First, it's not just good to be back to the District. It's incredible!

My duty in Iraq is an experience I will never forget. If I ever needed evidence, I saw it every day, that no other nation on Earth beside the United States of America could do what we are doing there. To be sure, brave and determined international partners, other government agencies and non-governmental groups worldwide have lent valuable presence and expertise in specific places, but the United States has done, and continues to do, the heavy lifting in Iraq.

When I relinquished command on June 24 of the Central District in Baghdad, I told them how very proud I was of our accomplishments. I listed the following major achievements:

- Electricity production in Iraq has surpassed pre-war levels. Aviators flying over Iraq nightly tell us - "the lights are on." The electricity that is increasingly available means security, comfort and jobs for the people of Iraq.

- Sewage in Baghdad is being treated for the first time in 15 years. To grasp the importance of that one has only to consider the alternatives - sewage running between buildings, down the streets, and untreated into the rivers.

- We have rebuilt two bridges on key transportation routes. They are both symbolic and practical accomplishments. They have reunited people and encouraged commerce and travel.

- The Port of Umm Qasr is now open. This is a vital port for the influx of goods and materials that will be needed for the reconstruction effort. Very real shoaling made it difficult to impossible to navigate and go pier side. Today Umm Qasr is a bustling port that is a nerve center for an increasingly prosperous nation.

We did all that in less than one year!

I am saddened to see though, that those are not the messages getting back to the people who are, or will be, part of this Herculean effort. Rather, there seems to me, to be an inordinate quantity and volume of reporting on criminal acts, rumors and controversies. I am not naïve. I understand that too often, blood leads in the media. It's not all their fault either. People read, watch and listen to these grim reports. They sell news.

But those unbalanced reports should not be the facts by which you evaluate what the nation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is doing to better Iraq and the world.

My Army, your Army, our Army, is as good as America has ever sent in harm's way. And believe me, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has contributed, and continues to contribute, in ways and magnitudes unequaled by anyone else.

Know this. Feel this. Tell this to everyone.

Some of you have already answered the call to be part of the mission in Iraq. Others are in the queue to go. Still more are considering possible roles.

I am not going to kid you. There are dangers and risks in Iraq and elsewhere in the region. It's not for everyone. You have to consider your family. You have to assess your health and personal readiness. If you can't go, that's fine.

But there are rewards and satisfactions that you will never know if you could go, but choose not to. The mission offers the opportunity to be part of something truly important. It offers a chance to succeed personally and be part of a great team. And finally, it is important - incredibly important.

As I told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch earlier this month, this struggle is not only for Iraq. It is for Iraq and the entire region that surrounds it. It is against a violent minority of people in that region who want to separate themselves from the rest of the world and then to destroy all who don't share their twisted beliefs. The outcome of this struggle will shape the 21st century world that your children and their children will live in. It's too important to ignore.

If you want to talk to me about it, my door's open. Others in the District have gone and will be glad to share their experiences. Ask. Weigh. Choose. But don't just ignore this mission or let it pass you by.

God bless you for all you have done to support the mission - the care packages, the school supplies and the love. You made a difference.

Essayons.



**US Army Corps of Engineers**  
St. Louis District®

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### New Chief of Engineers Chosen Cont. from page 1

Strock, was presided over by Army Chief of Staff, General Pete Schoomaker.

In his remarks to the generals, gathered officials, families and friends, the Army's senior officer said of the retiring Chief of Engineers: "General Flowers is a leader and a warrior, and we are thankful for his dedicated service."

Flowers took the stand next and told the audience: "The last four years, I've commanded a unique organization, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. There's nothing else like it," he said. He called the 35,000 members of the Corps, "Unique in all the world, great civil servants, taking care of the nation and its Armed Forces, and I'm enormously proud of them." The general ended his remarks by acknowledging the many



**Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker (left), U.S. Army Chief of Staff pins the historic MacArthur Castles, which are worn by the Chief of Engineers, on the lapel of Maj. Gen. (p) Carl A. Strock during the Retirement Review and Change of Command ceremony at Fort Myer, Arlington, Va. on July 1. These castles were given to Gen. Douglas MacArthur when he was commissioned as an engineer officer and have been worn by every Chief of Engineers since 1975.**

(photo credit, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, F.T. Eyre)

officers, noncommissioned officers and fellow Soldiers who had mentored him through his 35 years of service.

Maj. Gen. (P) Strock, who moves from duties as the Army's Director of Civil Works and Director of Military Programs, told the audience: "I am deeply honored and truly humbled to stand before you today. I am honored because there is no greater privilege than to be entrusted with command when your nation is at war."

Strock, a veteran of 33 years, started his Army career by enlisting before attending Officer Candidate School in 1972 and being commissioned a second lieutenant. He transferred from the infantry into the Engineer Branch in 1983. A registered Professional Engineer, he holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the Virginia Military Institute and a master's degree in the same discipline from Mississippi State University.

During his Washington tour in civil works and military programs, Maj. Gen.

(P) Strock was sent to Iraq, where until September 2003, he served as deputy director for the Coalition Provisional Authority, heading up the recovery effort from Baghdad, Iraq. A combat veteran in Panama and in Operations Desert Shield and Storm (1991), he has served in several increasingly responsible assignments overseas and in the United States, both within in the Army and the Corps of Engineers.





### New Mississippi Valley Division Chief Cont. from page 1

He commended them for all they had done under his leadership. "You go about your daily tasks with a tremendous sense of purpose and good will, the likes of which I have not seen in any organization before. You work with our citizens to do what is in the best interests of the nation and you bring strength, protection, and hope for the future to the people of the Mississippi Valley."

Speaking the next day, Riley reinforced his message, "The chief (Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers) describes MVD as 'The heart of the Corps' for a very good reason. It is because of what you do for the people of the valley and the great working relationships you have built with our tremendous partners."

General Riley's premature transfer from Vicksburg was occasioned by announcement of his nomination for promotion to major general and orders to assume the duties of Director of Public Works and Military Programs for the Army Corps of Engineers.

Vicksburg is no stranger to Brig. Gen. Crear, nor is he to it. The general was born and grew up there, and was graduated from nearby Jackson State University, Jackson, Miss., in 1975, where he received a degree in mathematics.

### Lt. Col. Gregory Raimondo is New Deputy District Commander

Lt. Col Gregory Raimondo, USA, EN has taken up responsibilities as the new Deputy Commander and Deputy District Engineer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis. He follows Maj. Joseph Tyron, who has departed for his next tour in Afghanistan, as the District's second in command.

A native of St. Louis, Raimondo's Army career has taken him from

After being commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army Engineers Corps, Crear rose steadily up the ranks in a series of assignments throughout the United States and overseas. In the ceremony, he noted that he and his wife of 35 years, Reatha, had moved 14 times during his career.

In 1998 he returned to Vicksburg to take command of the Vicksburg District. From Vicksburg he moved to Washington, DC briefly before being tapped for promotion to Brig. Gen. and assignment as the Corps Southwestern Division Commander in Dallas, Tex. While there, he was hand picked to go to Iraq to head up the U.S. Army's efforts to restore the Iraq oil industry in an operation dubbed "RIO."

Under Crear in Iraq, a cadre of 120 civilian volunteers, 500 contractors and 60,000 Iraqi oil workers teamed up to restore that war-torn nation's neglected oil industry to prewar production levels months ahead of schedule.

The command change ceremony was presided over by outgoing Army Chief of Engineers Lieut. Gen. Bob Flowers.

General Flowers, in one of his last official acts as the Army's 50th Chief of Engineers, praised outgoing Brig. Gen. Don Riley, awarding him both the Army Distinguished Service Medal and the Silver de Fleury, the highest honor presented by the Corps of Engineers to an engineer officer.

Germany to the Pacific island state of Micronesia, to the jungles of South America before his return to his new assignment within walking distance of his original stomping grounds in the "Hill" neighborhood in the city by the arch.

Before arriving in his new position, he most recently served only a few miles



**Brig. Gen. Robert Crear aboard a helicopter during his recent tour of duty in Iraq.**

General Flowers said, "He has been an outstanding leader and his contributions to the division and the Mississippi River Commission are many."

Following the ceremonial passing of the Corps Flag between the generals, symbolizing the transfer of authority and responsibility, Brig. Gen. Crear greeted the audience, and then thanked Lt. Gen. Flowers for appointing him to return home to command the Mississippi Valley Division.

"It is not often that a Soldier gets a chance to serve his country at home," he concluded.



**Lt. Col Gregory Raimondo**

south of the Spruce Street Headquarters, working at Jefferson Barracks as Engineer Advisor to all Missouri Army Reserve and National Guard engineer units.

Like many of his new civilian colleagues, he is a graduate of the University of Missouri at Rolla, Mo. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering Management there in 1986 and was thereafter commissioned a second lieutenant in the Army Corps of Engineers.

During his 18-year Army career, Lt. Col. Raimondo has held a variety of command and staff positions in the United States, and several others





overseas, including a tour in command of the 535th Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment) in Darmstadt and Vilseck, Germany. He has also served as a civic action team commander on the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia and in Columbia, for the Mobile District, working for a year on counter-narcotics bases.

In addition to his bachelor's degree from Rolla, he holds a Master of Arts Degree in Business Administration from Central Michigan University. His military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Course; the Combined Arms and Services Staff School; the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army Force Management School. He is also jump qualified, as indicated by his parachutist badge.

Lt. Col. Raimondo and his wife, Susan, have two daughters, Amy (12)



**Maj. Joseph Tyron briefs Lt. Col. Raimondo during his site visit to Rend Lake and Katherine (9).**

Off duty, he enjoys surfing (a bit out of the question in St. Louis, but he has spent two tours totaling seven years in

Hawaii), golf and as a family sport, competitive go-karting. Stop him and greet him when you see him. He's part of our family now!



Kathy Bradley came to the Headquarters front office as a student hire recently.

Though born in Oklahoma, she claims St. Louis as home, growing up here since age one and having numerous family here.

Before Kathy came to the District she worked at St. Louis Children's Hospital in the Child Development Center.

She is currently working for the Corps fulltime for the summer, but will revert to part time when she returns to Webster University this fall. There she is majoring in education, proudly carrying a 4.0 g.p.a.

Her husband Bryce, is a heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration specialist at Barnes Jewish Hospital and the Bradley's have a daughter Elizabeth, age 3. Kathy includes scrap booking and raising her daughter as her favorite pursuits away from work and school.



**Kathy Bradley**

Jen Godfrey is the most recent addition to the District's Regulatory Branch. The Ballwin, Mo., native came from her 2004 graduation from Missouri Valley College where she received a Bachelors

of Science in Biology. There, focusing her interest on population and reproduction among small-mouthed salamanders.

Outside classes at Missouri Valley College she took part in college soccer. Though competition is probably behind her, she said, she still enjoys outdoor sports, including hiking and train biking.

More school is in the near future. Jen will enter the University of Missouri, St. Louis' masters program in the fall, where she will continue research on amphibians. She hopes to incorporate her graduate research into her work for the Corps.

Her family resides in Ballwin, Mo., and Jen reports that she is the middle of five children, including two older sisters and a younger sister and brother.



**Jen Godfrey**

St. Louis native Amy Klingemann is the newest addition to the District's Office of Counsel. Here, her primary duties involve tort claims (non-contract litigation) and labor issues. She has also

worked in private law practice and at the Staff Attorney's Office for the 22nd Judicial Circuit of Missouri.

Amy did her undergraduate work at the University of Missouri, Columbia, receiving two degrees; a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Amy said that eventually she hopes to combine her Biology degree, for which she focused primarily on environmental studies with her law degree (from Washington University) to practice environmental law.

Amy's parents reside in St. Louis. Her hobbies include reading - nothing in particular she said - and caring for her pets, currently including three dogs, a cat and assorted fish.



**Amy Klingemann**



## The Thrill of Competition!

**The National Veterans Wheelchair Games, presented by Paralyzed Veterans of America and the Department of Veterans Affairs, took place in St. Louis June 15-19. Twenty-four District employees served as volunteers June 16 at the America's Center for the motorized wheelchair slalom events. Several other employees volunteered on other days.**

**The games are open to all U.S. military veterans who use wheelchairs for sports competition due to spinal cord injuries, certain neurological conditions, amputations or other mobility impairments. Participants competed in a wide array of events including track and field, swimming, basketball, weightlifting, softball, quad-rugby, bowling, archery, wheelchair slalom, power soccer, and trap shooting.**

**Five hundred and fifteen disabled veterans participated in the games. The oldest participants included some World War II veterans, while the youngest ones were injured during recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.**

**Some District employees share their thoughts on volunteering for the 24th National Veterans Wheelchair Games.**



There is one definition of disability that reads, "A person with a disability is a person with a physical, intellectual, sensory, or age-related disability or mental illness, or combination of these, who faces barriers in the social and physical environment that prevent them from fully participating and contributing to community life."

For anyone who volunteered or watched the National Veterans Wheelchair Games, they had to realize the word "able," not disabled, is the definition that applies to game participants! They participated with gusto and determination and they didn't let their disabilities stop them from achieving their goals. It's a lesson for all of us.

*Carol Matthews  
Human Resources*



Volunteering for the games was an experience I'll never forget. It can't really be described. It did make me realize that I take so much for granted. The participants that really touched me were the men that were using wheelchairs controlled by breathing tubes or by chin controls. I can only say that I have tremendous admiration for the participants and boy did they "wow" me!

*Barb Belpedio  
Ordnance and Technical Service Branch*

It was a very fulfilling experience volunteering on three separate days for the 24th Annual National Veterans Wheelchair Games. The competition got progressively tougher each day and the course was designed to push each participant.

The Corps folks and United Postal Service management were at the slalom events. The competition area initially held four separate courses but they were combined into the Super "G" for Saturday's final invitational event.

There were roughly 200 spectators present to watch the veterans maneuver through the course patterned after the cross-country skiing courses. There were multiple back-to-back obstacles and a paint ball 25-meter accuracy component that had three separate targets at three stations.

Every one of the participants finished with a few almost overmatched, but they never asked to stop. Once they made it over the teeter-totter and the ramps, sometimes with a gentle nudge, you could see their confidence build.

It is tough for me to imagine the inner strength and ability to overcome that was exuding from every participant. I tensed up almost every time one of them came close to tipping over, and as a rover on Friday and Saturday, I did catch a couple of spills.

It was fulfilling to be a small part of something that exhibits the value of competition and the will to overcome. If Col. Williams is the one who volunteered us for this venture, he is to be greatly thanked. Veterans from Vietnam to Korea to Iraq participated with dignity, courage and accomplishment. Life doesn't get any better than that.

*Billy Arthur  
Environmental Quality*







I initially felt that volunteering for the National Veterans Wheelchair Games would be a way for me to give back to the veterans who have sacrificed for my freedom; however, my participation gave me much more than I could ever give. The attitude, inner strength, and perseverance the veterans displayed in overcoming their disabilities was a truly humbling experience that I will reflect upon throughout my life.

*Claudia Tonsor  
Construction-Operations*

I wanted to be able to help the athletes participate and have a positive and fun filled experience. It was very uplifting to see the athletes participate. The majority of them were not concerned with winning but just being able to participate and complete the course. The determination that many of them displayed was phenomenal and the personal obstacles they had to overcome to participate were very humbling to me. This created a very rewarding and positive experience for both the athletes and the volunteers.

*Kathy Souders  
Contracting*

It was an honor to assist event setup, paperwork, and umpiring for those men and women. As a highly decorated, combat veteran, who has no injuries, these men and women are the "Real Heroes" for demonstrating courage above and beyond what I have to endure daily. I respect and admire their outlook on life, their courage, aggressiveness; desire to face a challenge and overcome it; the encouragement for each other as they attempted to master the courses, and their pride in their accomplishments.

*Archie Ringgenberg  
Contracting*



**Spotters cheer on a veteran who successfully negotiated a ramp obstacle.**

The National Veterans Wheelchair Games was a humbling event that definitely put those little aches and pains into perspective. Too bad more people didn't have the opportunity to witness these amazing people...what an inspiration!

It was one thing to see veterans, paralyzed from the waste down, go through the slalom obstacle course, but it was even more unbelievable to see quadriplegic vets traveling the same course. With limited peripheral vision and through the use of a device under their chin or by blowing into a tub, they successfully maneuvered the course.

I only wish I had more time to talk with the participants in order to understand what motivates a person in such challenging circumstances.

*Tom Hewlett  
Real Estate*

I don't deserve kudos for volunteering. It was an honor for me to be in the same room with the participants. They are real-American heroes. They've embraced their disability and have accomplished great things by doing so. It's a testament to the power of positive thinking.

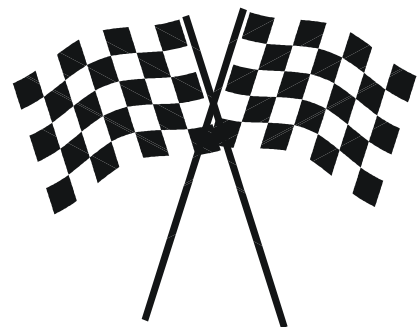
*Tisha Tyler  
Public Affairs*

Although I volunteered to be a support, and possibly an encouragement to the participants, they quickly became an inspiration to me, as well as to others. The participants confidently confronted obstacles and had a determination to strive for completion. Regardless of the various disabilities, their enthusiasm and determination made me realize that my "impediments" should be approached in the same manner.

I cried when one participant from our team had a lot of difficulty completing his task, but he stayed determined. Although it took him nearly triple the time to complete the task, he didn't give up.

The participants showed me that whatever I set my mind to, I can accomplish, and it doesn't matter what other people say or think.

*Tandika Gates  
Equal Employment Opportunity Office*





## Race for the Cure, 2004

*Twenty-five District employees participated in the 6th Annual Susan G. Komen St. Louis Race for the Cure on June 12. All the employees cited personal reasons for participating in the race that features a competitive 5K run, a non-competitive 5K run/walk and a one-mile fun walk.*

*Some employees walked to show their support for co-workers and family members, others walked as survivors and some walked as breast cancer patients. This year's race drew more than 50,000 participants from around the region.*

*The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, established in 1982 by Nancy Brinker to honor the memory of her sister, Susan G. Komen, who died from breast cancer at the age of 36, is an international organization that works through local affiliates and Race for the Cure events to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease.*

*The Race for the Cure raises awareness and funds for breast cancer research and local education, screening and treatment programs. Since its inception in 1982, the foundation has raised more than \$400 million through local, national and international programs.*

*Some District employees shared their thoughts on participating in this year's Race for the Cure.*

As a one-year survivor, I was overwhelmed by the support of my family, friends, and co-workers, not only on this day of the Race for the Cure, but all throughout my yearlong treatment. This day just reinforced what I have experienced since the day I was diagnosed - a great, encouraging support group.

I have three biological sisters and three sisters-in-law, blessed to be in a large family! One of them designed a shirt for us to wear that says, "We are linked together in the race for a cure!" I truly felt like I was linked together with 50,000 sisters during this walk; we are all sisters in this fight against breast cancer.

*Deanne Strauser  
Project Management*



**Deanne Strauser's family and friends wore yellow shirts and pink shorts to show their support for Race for the Cure. District employees showing their support too, posed for a group photo by Busch Stadium.**

In 2002, I participated with a co-worker whose family member had had breast cancer, never dreaming I'd be diagnosed 16 months later. On this hot and muggy Saturday in June 2004, halfway through with radiation treatments and with a circle of close friends and co-workers, I indeed walked - just one of more than 50,000, united to support the Race for the Cure.

I walked in acknowledgement of all those who had come before me, for all of the research that contributed to the great chemotherapy program I was able to participate in, and the radiation therapy I will soon complete. All of which allowed me to be there on June 12. I walked for those in the future who will be faced with this battle and to simply show - don't give up the fight!

I believe I have done very well through this period with the support of my family and friends and the many co-workers throughout the District who reached out with words of encouragement and still others who shared their own experiences to make this ordeal very bearable. Thanks!

*Kathrine Kelley  
Regulatory*

I did not walk this year since I was out of town, but I walked last year for the first time and will walk again in future years.

Why did I walk? I walked because I am still alive.

I walked because I am grateful for this, and because it is a wonderful feeling to be able to look at all the other survivors and supporters. When it comes to supporters there are none better than all the employees at the St. Louis District!

*Chris Bonucchi  
Resource Management*

This was my first time participating in the Race for the Cure and it was truly an amazing and rewarding experience to see so many people get together to support family and friends for such a worthy cause. I guess I never expected this disease to hit some of my closest friends, but knowing the challenges they had to face, I just wanted and needed to be there for them, and I'm glad I did it.

*Mary Winston  
Real Estate*





As I walked in the Race for the Cure it reminded me of some important things in my life.

As a woman, my heart has always gone out to another woman who finds out she has breast cancer. I don't know how I would react if I found myself in the same situation. I always think that it could have been me, and I continually pray for the miracle of recovery and comfort for them.

It was an honor to walk alongside Deanne Strauser and Kathrine Kelley. Seeing Deanne walking with all her friends and family in their yellow shirts and pink shorts is something I will never forget. I always think of Deanne with the kids at Kids Day and the way her eyes sparkled as she helped them. I know her enthusiasm and friendly way of doing things has touched a lot of people young and old; however, knowing how much she had to fight to get to where she is today is more of an inspiration than any words can say.

Our very own Civilian Advisory Council President, Kathrine Kelly, is truly an inspiration to me. She was serving as president one minute, planning our Christmas party and the next she was told she had breast cancer. I am so very proud of her for doing the race, especially since she is undergoing radiation now. It was awesome to see such determination as she walked in that heat.

There aren't enough words to say how much she has touched my life by being positive and determined while still keeping that sense of humor through it all.

Deanne and Kathrine, You are both an inspiration to us all, and I was honored to share in your special day.

*Cynthia Gan  
Real Estate*



Although I had planned on walking, I was not able to participate. However, I did purchase the t-shirt and actively/financially support this effort.

It's real simple. I know a lot of courageous women both survivors, and those who did not survive, who deserve support to find a cure. While I can't come up with the cure myself, I can at least contribute to the effort.

*Sue Horneman  
Regulatory*



**Thousands turn out to show their support for "The Race for the Cure."**

I started participating in the Race for the Cure about five years ago when asked by a friend to walk as part of a team for Anheuser-Busch. Since I'm a walker, I thought it would be good exercise, fun and it was certainly a good cause so I agreed. When I arrived at that first walk five years ago I was overwhelmed by the multitude of pink shirts. Everywhere I looked there were signs pinned to the backs of walkers citing "In Memory of Mom" or the name or picture of someone close lost to this disease. I wasn't expecting it to be so emotional.

Each year now I toy with the idea of just donating my money and walking my neighborhood trail where I can go earlier, it's cooler and there aren't 50,000 people there, but I find myself drawn to this event.

At that first race I didn't know anyone with breast cancer, but now, unfortunately, for the last three years in particular, my purpose for walking has not been for the exercise or the fun, but in support of people I know personally who have been stricken.

*Natalie Eschmann  
Project Management*

## Breast Cancer - Separating Fact from Fiction



Breast cancer is the subject of an endless flow of magazine articles, TV shows, Web sites, and books. People need to be educated about the facts because some of this information is false.

**The stress myth** — There is no evidence that emotional upset or severe stress causes breast cancer or causes it to recur after treatment. Studies published in *Psycho-Oncology* show that 42 percent of women who survived breast cancer erroneously blamed stress.

**The high-fat diet myth** — Long suspected of raising breast cancer risk, fat now seems to have no direct connection. A diet low in animal fats is beneficial in other ways, but there's no proof that it protects against breast cancer.

**Internet myths** — Some Web sites claim antiperspirants and underwire bras cause breast cancer. They don't.

**The exercise factor** — Regular exercise over a lifetime may be protective, but researchers think it's because exercise controls weight.

**The age myth** — The idea that breast cancer is a young women's disease is false. Breast cancer risk rises dramatically with age.

### The facts:

- Mammograms are still the gold standard for detecting breast cancer, according to the National Academy of Sciences. They have reduced mortality by one third in women aged 55 to 70.

- The causes of breast cancer are unknown, but genetics and lifetime estrogen levels play major roles.

- Good health practices are the best protection. Women who get regular blood pressure checks, exercise, avoid being overweight, don't smoke, and get regular mammograms have a lower risk.



Last week I was asked who I worked for and what do I do? I answered proudly that I worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. I also added that this is a water resources development agency.

I later thought about my response and realized that I had changed my answer in recent times. I used to answer this question by simply saying I worked for the Corps of Engineers. This little change in my response, while unplanned, was inspired by recent events.

I remember when I came to work for the Corps in 1969 there were many World War II veterans in positions of responsibility. They were very adamant about referring to this organization with its full and complete title. I was young and I had little knowledge of this organization's history, but I readily accepted the practice stating the full name.

As these veterans faded away, I think most of us (without much thought) also allowed the name of the organization to evolve into just saying, "Corps of Engineers." I now know this is an error and I want to explain why I believe this.

I don't know anyone who enjoyed diagramming sentences in school, but let me "diagram" the name of our organization: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Of course, the U.S. means the United States of America. Perhaps we should eliminate this abbreviation and say it completely and totally each and every

time. This is the greatest nation that has every existed on this planet. We are a relatively young nation and are still considered by some as an experiment. Never has there been a nation founded on the rights of the individual, the freedom of the individual and the independence of the individual. What a magnificent experiment!

Now here is where it becomes more serious and also grander. The word "Army" is a powerful word. I looked this word up in the dictionary and found: "Army: a large organized body of personnel armed and trained for war; a unit capable of independent action; a body of persons organized to advance a cause." The Corps is a part of this larger organization with a noble purpose and a very serious mission and obligation.

The word "Corps" is another interesting word. Webster defines it thusly: "an organized subdivision of the military establishment; a group of persons associated together or acting under common direction." I approve of this definition because it fits nicely with our common reference as the "Corps Family". We have a common goal and mission of solving problems and improving the quality of life of the citizens of our wonderful country.

The word "Engineers" in the title is also significant. The first definition given by the dictionary is: "a member of a military group devoted to engineering work." I find this to be an appropriate definition in the context of this article; however, I think additional definitions need to be explored. I also like this definition: "the application of science and mathematics by which the properties of matter and the sources of energy in nature are made useful to people in structures, machines, products, systems and processes."

The dual mission of our organization (civil and military) is now being fully exercised. This wasn't always on my mind, but it has been dramatically emphasized in recent times. From the Hydrologic and Hydraulics Branch we have sent three of our folks to Iraq (Mike Rodgers, Joel Asunskis and Mike

Henry). David Gordon went to Uzbekistan. In addition to my branch's involvement, there have been many more members from the St. Louis District (including our Commander, Colonel Williams) deployed.

Those deployed from St. Louis have included men, women, the young and old. Add to this the other districts within the Mississippi Valley Division, the other divisions, etc. - wow! What a magnificent demonstration of the versatility of this organization and what a dramatic demonstration of the value we provide to our great country.

OK, let me answer the question of who do you work for again. "I work for the United States Army Corps of Engineers." (Say it with pride). Now the next part of the question, what do you do? My answer is we are a water resources development agency.

Let's talk about "water resource development". I found a discussion pertaining to water resource issues in the 107th Congress. Betsy A. Cody, Analyst in Natural Resources Policy Resources, Science and Industry Division, wrote it. She wrote some words that are relevant to this article.

She said that water supply and management issues are becoming increasingly important as the demand on existing supplies continues to grow.

She went on to detail how our growing population and changing values have increased pressure on existing water supplies, resulting in water use conflicts throughout the country. These conflicts are particularly evident in the West, where population is expected to increase by 30% in the next 20-25 years and where urban needs often conflict with agricultural needs, as well as with increased demand for water for endangered species, recreation, and scenic enjoyment.

As you can see, as our nation has grown and matured, the demand for good, clean water has increased. The importance of an agency with special skills and dedicated employees - the United States Army Corps of Engineers - has become even more important to our





country.

I will close this article with one final thought. I believe rivers also provide an intangible value to our civilization. Rivers run through our country and they also run through our hearts and our minds too. Thomas Hart Benton was a Missouri artist who earned national renown. In his later years he became very fond of the rivers of his native Missouri and the Ozarks.

He wrote, "Muddy or not, the rivers have charm. Great sycamores hang over their banks and in the summer when the current moves slowly these are duplicated in the stream below. On one side or another of the rivers' outcropping white bluffs hang and break the monotony of tree branch and foliage."

Who do I work for?

I work for an organization, the very name of which when dissected, bears great meaning and impact. It is an organization with a rich heritage. It is an organization that answers the bell. It serves.

What do I do?

I work to ensure the future water resources of our great nation. They underpin our economy. They help ensure our security. They can support a bright future. And they sustain our souls when we stop and allow them to pass in front of our eyes and through our hearts. I work for the United States Army Corps of Engineers. We are a water resources development agency.

'Nuff said?

*Claude Strauser*



## Who is Willie B. Safe?

*Wappapello Lake*

Did you know that in July 2000, the then-St. Louis District Engineer, Col. Michael Morrow, proclaimed July as Ranger Willie B. Safe Month for the District? Do you know Ranger Willie B. Safe?

In May 1994 several Southeast Missourian youths, ages 10 and 11, drowned within a 24-hour period. Wappapello Lake staff immediately took the initiative to revolutionize its public safety education awareness program by developing new safety programs aimed at reaching elementary school students.

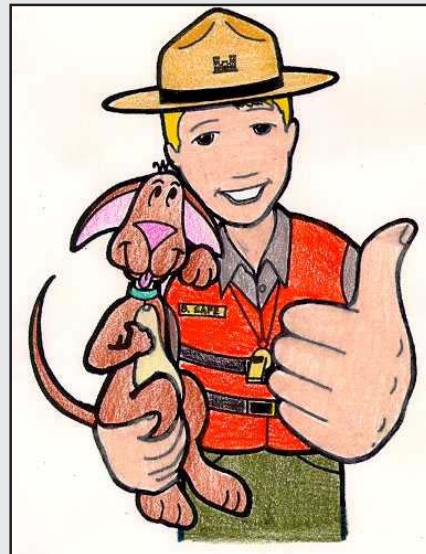
This milestone was reached in 1997 with the development of the Ranger Willie B. Safe Campaign.

Ranger Willie B. Safe is an icon that represents the spirit of safety much like Santa Claus represents the holiday season. While no one ever sees the "real" Santa, his helpers are everywhere. The same holds true for Ranger Willie B. Safe. You may never meet him, but you'll meet members of his Safety Team.

The safety campaign has grown to include activity books, safety songs, public service announcements, the annual Ranger Willie B. Safe Wet 'n Wild Waterfest, billboards, display boards in three local Wal-Mart stores, bookmarks, screen savers, magnetic and window decals, and camera-ready graphics for printed materials. Images of Ranger Willie B. Safe, alongside a safety message, even stand 120 feet above Wappapello Lake on two water towers.

The first Ranger Willie B. Safe activity books were printed in cooperation with the Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce in 1998. The activity book was awarded best-printed material at the 1999 Water Safety Summit.

The safety songs, written by Wappapello Lake's Administrative



**Willie B. Safe and one of his many pals work hard for water safety.**

Assistant, Donna Adams, were professionally produced at the Sound Cell Recording Studio in Huntsville, Ala., in 1998. The songs have since been aired on local radio stations in Southeast Missouri.

Every year full-sized billboards are placed on Missouri highways and cost-shared by all Corps' Districts in Missouri (Kansas City, Little Rock, Memphis, Rock Island and St. Louis), Missouri State Highway Patrol, Missouri State Water Patrol, Missouri Department of Public Safety and Missouri Division of Highway Safety.

Wappapello Lake has received national recognition for the Willie B. Safe campaign. Most notably the lake was presented a National Water Safety Congress Award of Merit at the 1998 International Boating and Water Safety Summit, and in 1999 the Chief of Engineers presented the Natural Resources Project of the Year Award to Wappapello Lake due in large part to its successful water safety campaign.





## Regulatory Deploying New Database for Permits

By Nicole Dalrymple

Congress charges the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers with regulating portions of the Rivers and Harbors and Clean Water Acts. To accomplish this requires a vast amount of data that locates sites, describes them in all ways and shows multiple interrelationships between what was, is and is proposed to be there.

Decision making for St. Louis District regulatory branch specialists requires an extraordinary level of detailed knowledge of virtually every square inch of the 28,000 square miles of the District. That same level of knowledge is required throughout the Corps.

On June 8-11 the St. Louis District's Regulatory Branch hosted a national workshop that addressed new initiatives and programs impacting the Regulatory Community of Practice Corps wide.

Since 1991 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has used a program called RAMS - the Regulatory Analysis and Management System - to manage its regulatory permit process. A new program, the OMBIL Regulatory Module, known as ORM, has been created to replace RAMS.

ORM is intended to centralize and streamline the regulatory process, help reduce the number of data calls from Headquarters and eliminate quarterly reports.

"All Districts will use the same process," explained Carol Cotter, St. Louis District's Regulatory GIS Administrator and Cartographer. Cotter was instrumental in organizing and running the workshop.

The workshop was a pivotal meeting that allowed the ORM National Steering Committee to meet for the first time and discuss issues facing the system's deployment and define committee member's roles and responsibilities.

Headquarter's Dave Olson leads the diverse committee comprised of 15 people from Districts including Baltimore, Jacksonville, Huntington, Little Rock, Omaha, Portland, Rock Island,



**Carol Cotter (L) and Jen Godfrey discuss implementation and capabilities of the new Regulatory database system, ORM.**

San Francisco, Vicksburg and Wilmington.

The process of integrating ORM has been situated into four levels. The first level is to introduce Geographical Information Systems (GIS), into the existing software. An advisory committee that Cotter sits on has been working on the integration of GIS since November 2002.

Many districts did not have GIS integrated into their permit process. St. Louis didn't until this March. "Our project managers were still using hard copy maps for their geographical information," Cotter explained.

Cotter has been working alongside contractor Teresa Silence, a GIS Program Manager with Applied Data Consulting, on the integration. "The ORM steering committee is working the 'who' and 'what' of the database, and we're working the 'where' piece," Silence said, explaining the value of the mapping technology.

Silence's company created custom tools that work within the framework of ArcView GIS, a software program.

"This has been a spiral development," Silence said. "We've given them a prototype and built incrementally from there. We've been getting feedback from the PMs on what they want."

Currently Ward Lenz and Shawn Sullivan are the District's power users in Regulatory, but after a branchwide

hands-on training session, many other regulators are pushing the limits of the system. "I can barely keep up with their requests for more data," said Cotter.

In trying to explain the program, Cotter, who is responsible for adding and maintaining the system's data, said to think of a sandwich. "The bottom piece - your bread - is the terrain. Then depending on what information the regulators need, they can turn on or off certain layers, like the cheese, meat, lettuce, tomato, etc." Some of the possible layers include streams, current area permits, soil polygons, streets, and schools. The possibilities are endless.

The power users, along with Chief of Regulatory, Danny McClendon, have been instrumental in shaping the system's tools and capabilities.

For instance, McClendon requested that the system show the location of all mitigation sites.

The system can measure the length of a creek to help the regulators determine jurisdictional authority. There's also an option to select a specific area in GIS and generate a printable map that can be used in public notices or elsewhere.

The second level of ORM integration is the ability to pull data from ORM. This step resulted in the development of a bridge between the ArcView software and the ORM database. When the St. Louis Regulatory Office has its data transferred from the RAMS system to





the ORM server, they will be able to read directly to the ORM database.

"When they first started transferring information in other districts it didn't move over correctly," Cotter explained. "Some points ended up in oceans and off course."

The St. Louis District has information related to 26,000 permits that will have to make the transfer. To prevent problems, Cotter requested an interim database. "We're taking the lessons learned from the other districts and deploying differently," she said. "All conversion of data to ORM is scheduled for the end of August."

Level three, where regulators will be able to write to ORM 'live', is in production right now and nearing completion. "No one is currently using level three," Silence said.

St. Louis District is scheduled to be the first district to write information 'live' into the system. The information added by the District will go directly to the national database and be there instantly. The system updates in real time.

Level four is the future vision, an integration of GIS and ORM "We want to leave the door open so that information can be shared between different disciplines and districts," Silence said.

"We want to be able to take the Lego pieces and be able to interchange and share them between districts," Cotter said. "In the future they could lay in different pieces of the 'sandwich' such as cultural resources, endangered species info, archaeological sites, real estate, Corps lands, etc. It would be a great tool for everyone."

The work between the ORM and GIS committees has really been a "grass roots thing" focused on making the program a functional tool for regulators, Cotter said. "We're impassioned to have a working tool and we've had a really good team effort from districts all across the community."

So Corps regulators have taken a giant stride toward answering a lot of questions, ensuring ORM is a workable tool and incorporating the Community of Practice into the process.



## Ranger Willie's Wet 'n Wild Waterfest 2004

By Kathy Dickson, Wappapello Lake

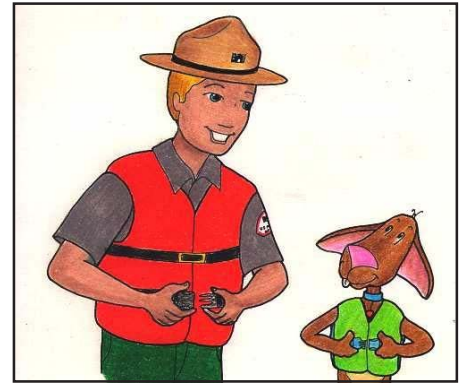
Wappapello Lake's Fourth of July holiday activities offered families a great way to kick back and relax and enjoy one of southeast Missouri's finest vacation spots. One of those activities was Ranger Willie's Wet 'n Wild Waterfest held July 3-4 in the Redman Creek Recreation Area.

Over 400 individuals participated in this event sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the SEMO Regional Water Safety Council. The event is focused on promoting water and boating safety education in a fun way.

The success of this event was made possible through the contributions of several local individuals and businesses. Members of the Water Safety Council worked tirelessly to collect door prizes and provide food concessions for everyone. Bo Bo the Clown, portrayed by Irene Settles, spiced up Waterfest by making a guest appearance at the beach.

Even though severe weather threatened both days, everyone remained in good spirits.

Activities included the inner tube, canoe, and cardboard boat race, dunking booth, watermelon eating contest, sand sculpture contest, tug-o-war, water



**Willie B. Safe and Sam both know it's important to wear their PDF.**

safety relay, ring toss game, and a fishing pond for the little ones. Participants in the dunking booth and ring toss games had to answer water safety questions in order to play. Door prizes were given away throughout both days.

Waterfest's safety activities stretched beyond the boundaries of the beach to include boaters. Park Rangers Andrew Jefferson and Diane Stratton cruised Wappapello Lake's waters to reward safe boaters who were wearing properly fitted life jackets.

Ranger Willie's Wet 'n Wild Waterfest is designed to encourage area communities to learn about and practice water safety. It is our sincere goal to prevent a drowning from happening, as one drowning is one too many.



**Willie B. Safe's Wet 'n Wild Waterfest promotes water safety messages through activities. All kids participating in the canoe race wear PFDs.**



## Aloha Retirement: Saying Good-Bye to Len Ross

By Nicole Dalrymple

"Construction is about people," said Len Ross, the District's recently retired Chief of Construction Branch. "Somebody is driving the nail at a construction site and that somebody is a person. Engineers on the third floor usually deal with data, and data isn't going to lie to you, spit in your face or curse at you."

Ross learned a lot about people and saw many changes in his 30-year career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He retired almost thirty years to the day from his first day with the Corps, July 8, 1974. Aside from two years spent working in Saudi Arabia, 1978 to 1980, Ross dedicated his entire career to the St. Louis District.



**Len Ross at the Ste. Genevieve railroad closure project.**

The construction of Mark Twain Lake and Clarence Cannon Dam was the first project he worked on. "At first I was inspecting rebar drafts for the dam and soon after that I became a project manager," he remembered.

Next came construction of Melvin Price Locks and Dam for which he was the chief of technical engineering, responsible for checking all the shop drawings. "Mel Price was a remarkable project. We were standing on the bottom of the Mississippi River," Ross said. It was a project of enormous scope. Just placing all the concrete took 10 years.

After the first phase of construction was complete there were \$35 million in claims from the contractors. Ross spent

several years working with the Office of Counsel and the Department of Justice in Washington D.C. to settle those claims. It was a rewarding experience from which he learned a lot.

"Fortunately claims are not now as big an issue as they were in the past," Ross said.

"Currently there are only two and they're the first in years."

One key has been better working relationships between the District and its contractors. "It's a working relationship rather than an adversarial one," Ross said. "We get along better with our contractors and deal with issues before they get out of hand, partnering more and having annual meetings."

The District's relationship with partners isn't the only thing that's changed during Ross' career. When he came to the District in 1974 there was an entire, stand alone Construction Division. At its height, the construction of Melvin Price, the Division had 120 employees. Today the Construction Branch has 29 employees with only four in the District Office.

"We manage things differently in construction now," Ross said. "We were once really big, but we ran out of a mission. Today we staff for only the minimum requirements."

A lot more talent will soon be leaving the Construction Branch, Ross pointed out. "There's going to be a lot of turn over; a lot of talent is getting ready to walk out the door. As a group we're old. We need a steady workload to attract young talent, showing them there's a future."

A born and bred St. Louisan, Ross and his wife Fran have decided to enjoy retirement in Florida. Several years ago they were on vacation and came upon a future subdivision being cleared. Ross could tell it was going to be a nice area



**Construction's Bruce Douglas (L), Marge Robbins, Len Ross and Clarice Trigg at Len's retirement luncheon.**

so they decided to purchase a lot.

Together they designed the house. Ross kidded that any marriage that could survive designing a home was in good shape. Construction on the house began in 1993 and up until last year renters had been living there. Fran retired from her teaching career last year and headed for Florida. She has been remodeling the house and "spending money like I have it," Ross joked.

Ross admits that retiring is kind of a scary prospect. He's not quite sure what he'll do with himself. "I come to work on an adrenaline high. The closer I get to work the faster I drive. I have so much fun. I get to do challenging things with interesting people and get paid tons of money. I'll miss the fun of working with these people, even the blockheads."

A tradition began during Mel Price that Ross carried on until his last day, Friday, July 2. During construction one of the contractor's employees, who was from Hawaii, would wear Hawaiian shirts on Fridays, saying it was "Aloha Friday!" Ross and some of the other Corps employees joined in, and almost twenty years later you can still find a few honoring that fun tradition.

Len Ross, who rode off into the sunset on July 3, is hopefully sitting on the beach this very moment wearing a Hawaiian shirt. We wish you a fond farewell, Len. Thank you for your years of service. God Bless and God Speed. We hope that there are seven "Aloha Fridays!" in all of your weeks now!





## Retiree's Corner



The retirees had their monthly luncheon at the Salad Bowl June 17.

Joe Bisher brought two pictures displaying the Bisher-family fishing talent. One was of a 4-pound bass that he recently caught, saying it would make a great meal. The other picture was of another talented Bisher.

In 1916, Joe's grandfather, Martin Bisher of New Hamburg, Mo., was in a horse-drawn wagon with a friend near the Mississippi River around Charleston, Mo. The river was receding from high water and had stranded some fish in a low water area. Martin got into the water and tried to guide to shore a large fish that had been trapped, but it was too big.

He got a rope and tied it around the fish and using his wagon pulled it to shore. It turned out to be a 9-foot alligator gar weighing about 180 pounds. The fish was mounted and still hangs on the wall inside Schindler's Tavern in New Hamburg. Some would say it's a big fish story, but Joe says it's a sign of a great fisherman who can catch a fish without a hook.

Don Wampler said he's been trying to contact Bob Maxwell, but with no success. Seems Bob is very busy with all the volunteer work he does. At Bob's age, it is wonderful that he has time and stamina to be so active.

Lew Scheuermann and his wife Helen participated in the Senior Olympics. They were victorious, winning a bronze medal for bowling mixed doubles and Lew came in fourth in golf. Congratulations Lew and Helen on your great accomplishments!

Everyone was told about the death of Vito Polizzi, a long time employee in construction. Our condolences go out to his family.

## FLASHBACK June 1969

- The Dredge Ste. Genevieve was mobilized to the Illinois River and 40 District employees rode aboard her as far as Locks 26 at Alton, Ill. It was an interesting experience for many of those who had their first visit aboard a dredge.

- Lt. Col. Wayne Alch took Congressman William Hungate on an aerial tour of the Mississippi River. The next week he spoke about Shoal Creek at Breese, Ill., before KVA members. The next week he gave a Meramec Park project status report to the Meramec Basin Association.

- Dick Cameron spoke to 1,000 people at the Shelby Electric Cooperative meeting about the economic impact of Shelbyville Reservoir.

- Col Decker presented a paper on Locks and Dam No. 26 at an ASCE meeting in Louisville, Ky.

- Several employees of the Shelbyville Resident Office gave speeches and tours during the month, with Larry Meier, Art Tosetti, Wayne Williams, Ed Henne, Janet Laugharn, Stan Wiseman and Joe Thompson doing the honors.

- Glen Walker and Alban LeGrand of Carlyle Reservoir represented the Corps as guests on radio station WILY, Centralia, Ill.

- Mr. Nelson Maxwell of the Rend Lake Resident Office received a Certificate of Achievement for representing the St. Louis District in the competition for the Outstanding Handicapped Federal Employee of the Year Award.

- New District employees included:

- ♦ Norris W. Davis Realty Assistant
- ♦ David J. Steger Accountant
- ♦ Daniel W. Flippan Civil Engineer
- ♦ Robert D. Mesko Surveying Aid

The retiree's luncheon is held the third Thursday of every month, approximately 11 a.m. We meet at the Salad Bowl Restaurant, 3949 Lindell Blvd. Everyone is welcome. See you there!

## Watch Out for Summer Safety Hazards



**Don't be a member of the summer SWAT team.**

### • Bee stings

More than 500,000 people are treated in emergency rooms each year for bee stings, and 40 die. Bees are attracted to bright clothing, the smell of perfumes and lotions, and sweet foods and drinks.

If you are stung, remove the stinger by scraping it away with a credit card. (If you squeeze it, more venom will come out.) Wash the area and apply antiseptic. If you have a history of allergic reactions, ask your doctor for an Epi-kit, a syringe filled with epinephrine, a hormone that prevents shock.

### • Poison ivy, oak, sumac

If you touch poison ivy, poison oak, or poison sumac, remove the irritating resin as soon as possible. Wash the area with rubbing alcohol followed by soap and water. If no alcohol is available, at least wash well with soap and water.

Mosquito bites

They itch like mad and mosquito bites can transmit diseases like West Nile Virus. A swarm could even make you fall out of your boat (so be sure to wear a life jacket). Repellents containing DEET offer the best protection. For children under age 6, don't use an insect repellent that contains more than 15 percent DEET.

## Don't get 'Phished'

Internet scammers are casting about for people's financial information by going "phishing."

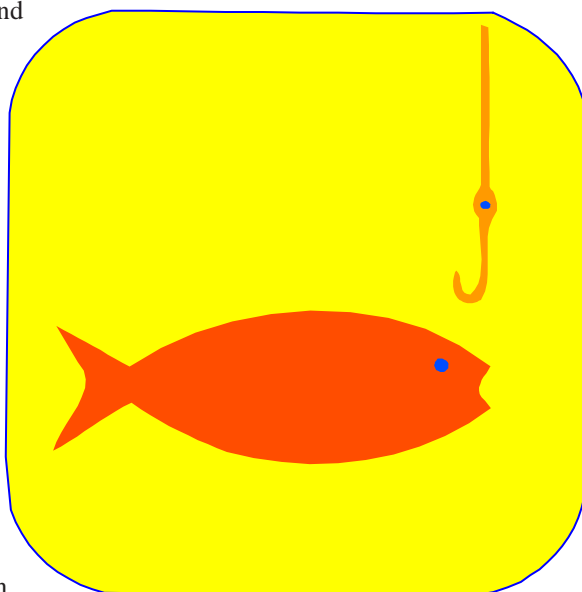
Phishing is a high-tech scam that uses spam or pop-up messages to deceive you into disclosing your credit card numbers, bank account information, Social Security number, passwords, or other sensitive information.

According to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), phishers send emails or pop-ups that claim to be from businesses or organizations you deal with - for example, your Internet service provider (ISP), bank, online payment service, or even a government agency. Messages usually say that you need to "update" or "validate" your account information. They may threaten dire consequence if you don't respond. They direct you to a Web site that looks just like a legitimate organization's site, but it isn't. The purpose of the bogus site? To trick you into divulging personal information so they can steal your identity and run up bills or commit crimes in your name.

The FTC, the nation's consumer protection agency, suggests ways to help you avoid getting hooked by a phishing scam:

- If you get an email or pop-up message asking for personal or financial information, do not reply or click on the link in the message. Legitimate companies don't ask for this information via email. If you are concerned about your account, contact the organization in the email using a telephone number you know to be genuine, or open a new Internet browser session and type in the company's correct Web address. In any case, don't cut and paste the link in the message.

- Don't email personal or financial information. Email is not a secure way to transmit personal information. If you initiate a transaction and want to provide your personal or financial information through an organization's Web site, look for indicators that the site is secure, like a lock icon on the browser's status bar or a URL for a website that begins "https:" (the "s" stands for "secure"). Unfortunately, no indicator is foolproof; some phishers have even forged security icons.



**Don't become a victim of a cyber "Phisherman."**

- Review credit card and bank account statements as soon as they arrive to check for unauthorized charges. If your statement is late by more than a couple of days, call your credit card company or bank to confirm your billing address and account balances.

- Use anti-virus software and keep it up to date. Some phishing emails contain software that can harm your computer or track your activities on the Internet without your knowledge. Anti-virus software and a firewall can protect you from inadvertently accepting such unwanted files. Anti-virus software scans incoming messages for suspicious files.

Look for anti-virus software that recognizes current viruses as well as

older ones; that can effectively reverse the damage; and that updates automatically. A firewall helps make you invisible on the Internet and blocks all communications from unauthorized sources. It's especially important to run a firewall if you have a broadband connection. Finally, your operating system (like Windows or Linux) may offer free software "patches" to close holes in the system that hackers or phishers can exploit.

- Be cautious about opening any attachment or downloading any files from emails you receive, regardless of who sent them.

- Report suspicious activity to the FTC. If you get spam that is phishing for information, forward it to [spam@uce.gov](mailto:spam@uce.gov). If you believe you've been scammed, file your complaint at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov), and then visit the FTC's Identity Theft Web site at

[www.consumer.gov/idtheft](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft) to learn how to minimize your risk of damage from ID theft. Visit [www.ftc.gov/spam](http://www.ftc.gov/spam) to learn other ways to avoid email scams and deal with deceptive spam.

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them.

To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft, and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

*Drawn from an FTC press release.*